623 fendants unwilling to abide by the decision of the elders may have recourse to the T'u-ssu; but his verdict very seldom differs from that of the elders.

577 From the foregoing it can be seen that the concepts of the Monguors seem to be based on custom, tradition, and 184 what community opinion accepts as "just." Typical concepts are: wrongs are to be righted; injustices to be corrected; the rights of parents over their children, of husbands over their wives, and of widows to dispose of themselves, are to be asserted and defended; private property is to be protected; no one has the right to disturb the peace of the community. It is apparent also that among the Monguors the villagers in reality govern themselves. Although the elders are backed by the authority of the T'u-ssu, it is the villagers themselves who for the most part patch up their own quarrels, punish faults, right wrongs, and keep the peace.

The system is, in effect, one of democracy. It is only when these democratic practices do not work that recourse is had to the aid and protection of the T'u-ssu.

•181 At the village meetings on the threshing floor, overwhelming stress is placed on faithful adherence to the old customs. One of the most important duties of village chiefs is to watch over their observance. The T'u-ssu, on his triennial visit, always makes inquiries on this subject, on which conservatism can be truly called hidebound. When Monguors, especially of the older generation, are heatedly discussing matters of the village, and the supreme argument of "old custom" is brought up, all opposition instantly subsides. The chiefs and elders of villages and the heads of families always urge the observance of traditions. They are firmly convinced that neglect of ancestral custom ruins the stability and prosperity of the clan. On every occasion the younger generation has this injuction dinned into its ears. The chiefs of the villages will curse other chiefs of villages, and T'u-ssu who are careless of old custom. The test of a good village chief or T'u-ssu is unshakable firmness in strict observance of the clan traditions as if they were as unyielding as the laws of nature.

177 When the Chinese Republic began in 1911, however, new ideas which had a baneful repercussion on the minds of young Monguors started to spread. It was almost a hopeless struggle for the elders to try to save the old customs. It then became apparent that the Monguors were in fact not sufficiently insulated from the pressure exerted by new ideas from outside their own society. Their social concepts had gradually been undermined and weakened by the enrollment of Chinese in their clans. Chinese concepts had, unnoticeably, long been seeping into their thought—Chinese had, it must be remembered, risen to be even village elders—and a situation had gradually been created in which the Chinese way of thinking, even if conservative in itself, was disruptive of the old Monguor concepts if it differed from Monguor concepts.

[P 80a]

1; Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

562 chronic warfare among the ancient Mongols and Turks
581 required alliances as well as feuds.

Hence the institution, known to be very early, of "pairs" of clans, each regularly taking its wives from the other in a sort of marriage alliance.[5] An association of this kind was a natural basis for alliance in war, since each clan would not only be aiding an ally but contributing to the security of its own daughters.[6]

512 Among pastoral nomads the traditional life of the
181 man, especially the married man, is one of long periods of idleness, spent largely in gossip and visiting, alternating with short periods of intense activity—in former times, defensive and offensive warfare, and in modern times the periods of migration, especially spring and autumn migration, and the periods spent by a man when he is summoned for obligatory service under the clan or tribal chief. The Monguors, as descendants of nomads, have inherited this tradition. The Monguor men, however, because of the change to an agricultural economy, cannot be quite as lazy as pastoral nomads. Farming cannot be profitable unless the men do their share of the work; but in spite of the example of patient toil set them by their Chinese neighbors, the Monguor men are never as industrious as the Chinese.

512 In the home, the kitchen and all things concerning
462 food, the preparation of meals and cleaning up after meals are women's work. Women also collect the fuel, consisting chiefly of the droppings of cows, horses, and sheep, which after being collected have to be dried in the sun until they are combustible. In the early morning when the cocks are still crowing to announce the coming day the wives start working while their husbands go on sleeping. First the wife must go to the well with a wooden cask on her back to fetch water. Then she boils water in the iron cauldron, set in the hearth, to make tea. While she is making the tea she carries hot water to her husband for washing. While the husband is drinking his early morning tea the wife dresses and washes the children, prepares breakfast and carries a

[5] Vladimirtsov, *Le régime social des Mongols*, as cited, 58. "Les Mongols des XIe-XIIIe siècles devaient parfois aller chercher très loin leurs femmes, et s'accorder avec un clan éloigné. En effet, . . . les pâturages étaient distribuées de telle manière chez les anciens Mongols, que souvent on ne recontrait aux alentours aucun répresentant d'un clan étranger. . . . Ceci explique, les réminiscences anciennes aidant, la fréquence des rapts; les femmes etaient enlevées de force chaque fois que l'occasion favorable s'en présentait.

"On relève fréquemment l'usage pour un clan de choisir ses promises dans un autre clan, mais toujours le même. Les membres de ces clans s'accordent mutuellement le titre d' 'allié,' de parent par alliance, '*quda*.' Parfois l'échange des jeunes filles à marier donne lieu à des traités en règle entre clans." (Note that side by side with the word *quda* there is the word which in modern Mongol is *hadam* and in Monguor *gadim*—see the Monguor relationship terms as given above—which expresses "relationship with a woman married into my clan, or a man who has married a woman from my clan."—O. L.)

[6] It is possible that this kind of association also helps to account for the importance of the maternal uncle, as "the man who has interest in both clans."—O. L.

[P. 88 b].

/7 cont'd/

627 581 181 The argument of the judges, before the whole village and the families in question, is very instructive for us. The young man, they said, has not respected the customs of our race, furthermore, he has been unjust with respect to the girl's family; these are grave errors; after the principal accusers, tirades are heard on the necessity of marriage and the indigence of the unfortunate man; finally, he is excused by going back to the extreme obligation to marry. As for the girl, disobedience is censured and the rights of the parents are loudly proclaimed, but she was brave in offering the young man the chance to marry, for marriage is a duty.

We should scarcely admit such reasons; and so I remarked to my catechist and explained to him that in my opinion this was only the commonplace story of a couple who loved each other. "That is possible," he replied, "but it is certain that the young man thought above all of the duty of marriage, and it is poverty which induced him to leave with the girl; as for the girl, she was courageous." It was the same argument. I encountered therefore the same way of thinking in my catechist.

This case would probably be resolved in the same way in the West as in the East, that is to say the union would be legalized; but the motives which would be invoked would be completely different.

/8/ This fact was for me a revelation at the time, and I was able to verify it many times later; it made me acquainted with the T'ou-jen way of thinking on the subject of the general necessity for marriage.

2. Necessity for Male Descendants

858 562 181 581 Another mental habit among the T'ou-jen is an excessive desire to see children born, and especially male children.

In Europe one is not too concerned when a family has no children or when there are only girls. Among the T'ou-jen the greatest of misfortunes is the absence of male children. It is necessary to be in the Orient to "live" the text of canon law: Matrimonii finis primarius est procreatio atque educatio prolis /"The primary purpose

/8 cont'd/

858 562 181 581 of marriage is the procreation and rearing of offspring"/. The son is the dream of the Orient. One will resign oneself to poverty, but one will never be consoled for not having a son; one will be consoled over the death of a husband or wife, but one will continue to weep for the loss of an only son. The fact of having no son will be interpreted as a punishment of heaven for sins committed in former lives. One will disregard expenses required for good works and pilgrimages in the interest of producing a male child. Extraordinarily noisy celebrations will be given upon the birth of a first-born son, in which the whole village will take part. The greatest happiness of a T'ou-jen woman will be that of having many sons; so that when one lives in T'ou-jen country, one thinks involuntarily of the Roman mother of the Gracchi presenting her children to her friends, saying, "Here are my jewels." One rarely sees alms refused to the numerous religious and lay beggars; it is because the terrible curse they are accustomed to offer, "Be without descendants," is feared. On the contrary, after receiving alms, the beggar will thank the giver by wishing him a numerous male posterity.

181 595 We must therefore expect to see matrimonial customs strongly influenced by this way of thinking. Thus, when the wife has no children or no sons, it seems natural /9/ to everyone to take a second wife and even a third. Every T'ou-jen, even the most upright, if means permit, will act in this way. He will not lose the esteem of his fellows in the least for doing so; all of them will even advise him to do so, the most religious man as well as the most pious woman. When the first wife has borne sons, and the husband takes a second, nothing shocking is seen in it, for the more sons one has, the better it is.

I always remember the discussions I had with T'ou-jen friends on the subject of polygamy. I admit that it seemed to me that my arguments did not convince them, even that they were not understood. The good fortune of having sons was for them too sublime an entity to be capable of being put on the same level with the family troubles which polygamy entails; if the bringing up of children of different mothers must leave something to be desired, this disadvantage is a negligible quantity in their eyes, even a quantity of lower order

/9 cont'd/

181 595 compared to the happiness of having descendants. This way of thinking has distant origins; the T'ou-jen inherited it from their ancestors, and they have kept it scrupulously for centuries. Let us not be surprised therefore that because of it certain customs which seem inadmissible and shocking to us appear reasonable and justifiable to the T'ou-jen.

We shall set forth in what follows the matrimonial customs of a people which is convinced of the duty of marrying, and which expects male descendants from marriage.

/10/ Division of the Study

583 Marriage is the legal union of a man and woman. But with the T'ou-jen the daughter being the property of the parents, in the true sense of the term, an indemnity is imposed on the one who wishes to marry her.

This indemnity is paid in two ways; either by purchase or by the furnishing of his person or his services for the benefit of the owner of the girl.

587 The marriage of widows, which still often takes place nowadays in the ancient form of abduction, nevertheless falls in the category of marriage by purchase; for after having taken the widow to a safe place, a discussion is held about her price. Therefore, we shall deal successively with:

I. Marriage by purchase
II. Marriage by furnishing one's services or person
III. Abnormal marriages
IV. Divorce, repudiation, and exchange of wives
V. Runaway wives
VI. The matriarchate

/20 cont'd/

584 Custom requires that the engaged couple not have relations before marriage and that they avoid each other as much as possible.

[593] We are in the Orient. Parents are absolute masters of their children. They do not conceive of marriage as being their children's personal business. With them marriage is today a family matter, as it was formerly that of the whole group, or the community.

181 178 Nowadays the T'ou-jen family seeks its own advantages in it, and the interested parties find it natural that the general welfare precedes the individual welfare, just as formerly their families, living in clans, in compact groups, found it natural that the welfare of their private families be subordinated to that of the whole group.

584 The evolution of the T'ou-jen individual today has not yet reached the point where his personal interest takes precedence over that of his family. Parents alone, then, decide the marriages of their children, and the latter find this custom rational and accept, with their fatalistic way of thinking, the often deplorable consequences of it.

/21/ However, it can happen, when a girl has not been sought in marriage at an early age, which is unusual, that the young people have talked about things other than the fine weather. In these cases it is natural that there are preferences and that the parents take them into account, provided they are not injurious to the interests of the family and especially those of the mother-in-law. But this case is the very great exception because the children are already betrothed before they have been able to make a choice.

3. When the Marriage Proposal Is Made

The marriage proposal is rarely made after the young people are old enough to understand the importance of this act and are capable of manifesting their preferences. Besides, nobody has ever thought of waiting until the children were old enough, for marriage is the task of the parents and not of the children. But such a case can occur upon the death of one of the betrothed persons toward the time of the marriage; again, it can occur in a family which was too

HM 583 /70 cont'd/

apart from clothing and utensils, of a certain quantity of ewes and horses (among the Mongols).

/71/ 15. The Wedding

M 585 Then they proceed to the marriage ceremony as such. This most solemn ceremony of all recalls Biblical times to us, first because of its profoundly religious character, and then because of the old man officiating.

M 603 604 Actually, this office belongs by right to the grandfather in the bridegroom's family. When the grandfathers are dead, the maternal uncle takes their place. The name given to the old man who officiates is very characteristic: he is called šürödžin khun, which means literally "the man who gives the blessing." Indeed, it is the old man who orders the prostrations to be made to heaven, to the spirits, to the members of the family and clan, and it is he who pronounces the wishes for good fortune and prosperity, the bringing about of which is awaited from heaven and the spirits. Thus we are in the presence of a religious rite in the full force of the term, a rite which reveals the capital importance attached to marriage. Besides it leaves an unusual impression on the assemblage.

All those present are standing. The bridegroom is on his knees at the left of the bride, whose head is still enveloped in the red cloth; the maid of honor is on her knees behind the bride, likewise a young man behind the bridegroom. Then the grandfather advances and takes his place standing near the sacred fire; he orders in the midst of the greatest silence:

M 585 181 THAT THE FIRST PROSTRATION BE MADE TO HEAVEN AND TO THE MULTIFARIOUS SPIRITS.

Dĕ thurŏŋ thorguĕ šge thiaŋgeri olon phurgán ńiandu murgu.

The bride and groom, the maid of honor and the young man make the great Chinese prostration: three genuflections and as many bows, touching the ground with the forehead. All is done solemnly and simultaneously.

/72/

585 181 THAT THE SECOND PROSTRATION BE MADE TO THE FATHER AND MOTHER AND TO THE PRINCIPAL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY.

Dē gōrda thorguē āni awa khudugu ɣgesdu murgu.

THAT THE THIRD BE MADE TO THE PERSONS OF THE MOTHER'S CLAN AND TO THE WHOLE CLAN.

Dē gŭ'ānda thorguē urug tharug imag saru ñiandu murgu.

Then in the midst of the greatest silence he continues in a solemn voice:

MAY YOU BE ABLE TO BUILD SEVEN FARMS!

MAY YOU BE ABLE TO BUILD HOUSES WITH A SECOND STORY AND A VERANDA!

MAY YOU BE ABLE TO SHEAR SEVERAL HUNDRED SHEEP ANNUALLY!

MAY YOU BE ABLE TO MOUNT HUNDREDS OF HORSES AND RAISE HERDS OF HUNDREDS OF OXEN!

MAY YOUR SONS BE NUMEROUS: SO THAT YOU MAY SEE YOUR GRANDSONS STILL MORE NUMEROUS!

MAY YOUR FAMILY BE FECUND AND OVERFLOWING WITH PROSPERITY LIKE THE SEA WHICH OVERFLOWS!

MAY YOU BE DURABLE AS IRON!

MAY YOU DAY BY DAY BECOME RICHER AND MORE POWERFUL LIKE FIRE ON WHICH OIL IS POURED!

585 Then the old men and the parents throw some cash on the felt at the feet of the young couple. The maid of honor removes the veil from the young wife and leads her into the nuptial chamber. The two lamps which burn on the table in the middle of the courtyard are taken away to be put before the religious image, where they will burn as long as there is any oil.

[793] Let us note the absence at this marriage ceremony of any religious personnel, shaman, lama, tao-jen /Taoist priest/; let us notice in addition that it does not take place in a temple, but that it is performed in the home, under the authority of the head of the family, in front of the ancient shamanistic sacred fire, and under the patronage of "heaven and the multifarious spirits." Marriage among the T'ou-jen is then, incontestably, /73/ something other than a simple union of the sexes. The wishes for prosperity enunciated

[10 cont.]

124 had in mind. Besides, I had not treated him respectfully enough and made the mistake of not offering him enough brandy. After all, at that time I was still unacquainted with the proverb of the Chinese: t'u-jen chien chiu, chia-la chien liu; freely translated, "The Tujen are as fond of brandy as goats are of greens."

[181] [273]

Only after a year did I again get in touch with him. At that time I was celebrating a festival in a neighboring community and invited the old man by messenger to a mutton feast. He received the place of honor next to me, ate his fill of the meat, and was challenged by one person after another to the drinking game, during which he consumed an ample amount. In this state of uplift an old Chinese, his former classmate, negotiated with him and obtained his consent to live with me for a few days in the station. When he appeared in January, 1947, he was received in the friendliest manner. He sat at the table with me and received as much barley wine as he liked, and he could take a sizeable quantity of it. Upon his departure in the afternoon I presented him with sugar, currants, baked goods, sausage, and cigars, things that are not common there, with which, as he said, he demonstrated at home the generosity of the European who had treated him as a complete and equal human being. When, in addition, I made it possible for him and his wife to receive medical treatment without cost from the mission sisters, his distrust disappeared; from then on he always showed up at my place for a number of days, and precisely on the date agreed upon, which is astonishing among these people.

[273] [262]

To the old man's credit, let it be said at this point that afterwards he made absolutely no demands. He valued his honor and wanted to be taken seriously. For the rest, he lived in the same room with the employees of the mission station, slept on the same kang, and ate the same food, even though I offered him a room of his own and a special diet. He stated: "That does not suit an old farmer like me; I want to be with your people so that I have company." Only on certain days, for instance, at festivals or when there were visitors, did he have to have a substantial drink. This strongly stimulated him to tell stories, during which my attention was drawn to

[12 cont.]

115 123 respected their customs and did not condemn them or brand them as backward superstitions. In this respect one cannot in the long run disguise his feelings. With a sure sense the natives noticed whether one meets them with good will and respect or regards himself as superior to them. Since the old man was no dolt and had also read many a Chinese book, he knew, for example, that the Chinese tend to dismiss the peoples on their borders as [181] barbarians. He also knew how the Chinese nearby laugh at the Tujen as backward "natives." And finally he had heard that the Christians designate as superstition much that is dear and sacred to the Tujen and the Chinese. Thus it is understandable that occasionally he would say: "Father, do not be surprised when I tell you such and such. We believe in it." Or: "Please do not laugh at it when we do something in such a way." On his part, this inhibition was extensively bridged by the genuinely tolerant [829] attitude of the Asiatic: "All religions are good. The goal is the same, only the ways are different." On my part, the decisive attitude was that every person's conviction is to be respected if he means it honestly, even though, objectively speaking, he may be on the wrong road. The same applies to religion. And when I told the old man, "I believe such and such, you believe such and such, but I am not therefore better than you; it depends upon the conscience," he gladly agreed. Nor was any attempt ever made to influence him in his religion. He knew little about Christianity, but neither did he regard it as mystery-mongering when he inquired about it among my people. They always stressed to him: "You can hear and see everything that we do. We have no secret religion. We tell you everything. If you want to read our books, you may have them." One day he came with the question: "Should I not become a Christian?" I told him: "That depends on you. The heart of a man cannot be forced. Everyone should act according to his insight."

115 171 It greatly cheered his openheartedness to find many a similarity between the Christian and Tujen ceremonies. Thus he was quite surprised at the fire ceremony on Easter eve. In the church he saw altars, saints' images, an oil lamp. He saw how the Christians fell on their knees. He knew: We, too,

with silk flags, to look at the hundreds of measures of grain put into the chair, the hundreds of pounds of sugar and raisins, the hundreds of rich garments, and the herd of sheep which follows the chair (for the few pieces of meat are called a "herd of sheep"), and so on, for the other items. They implore it to look at the unusual prodigality of the customer, who is a fervent adherent of the faith. After the parody is played, the lamas have a good time visiting the neighbors. On the seventh day, at night, all the neighbors help escort the troublesome spirit outside the village, forming an imposing cortege with banners flying and drums, horns, and some rifles, and carrying the sedan chair, the caldron and bull head, the spears and swords. The lamas blow the trumpets made from a human femur. The bull head, spears, and swords are buried in a deep hole; a big fire is lit and the pit is filled, at full speed, flush with the ground. The stake is thrust into it; the whole group howls and curses the avenger, rifles are fired, trumpets blown, and the lamas return. The sedan chair is emptied by the neighbors. Restitution is thus made, the avenging spirit is appeased and thrust into the hole, and the thief remains possessor of his thievery.

A rich man, Lo san lao, who lived in Ha-la-chih Valley, had succeeded in bringing to his home the fine young lady of the poor Monguor Li sse of Naring Valley. Calamities then troubled his family, and he invited Yellow lamas to perform the rite. They placed in the sedan chair a fine paper lady. The rite of the caldron and bull head was carried out, and the avenging spirit was thrust into the hole. Restitution was thus made by means of a paper lady, but he remained the possessor of the real one.

After many years this rite as performed by Red lamas, invited by the famous Sumpa Hutukhtu in order to compensate for the injustices perpetrated by his intendants, is still talked about in the country. The splendid sedan chair was on this occasion lavishly filled with precious items. A beautiful horse which followed the cortege was abandoned for the neighbors. After the bull head had been buried and the avenging spirit thrust into the hole, hundreds of people had tried to capture the horse.

The claims of justice are deeply embedded in the consciousness of the people, and the necessity of restitution for injustices is always advocated by the lamas, although the magical rite of restitution seems to be a mockery of its real intent. Justice seems to rank first among the virtues.

In connection with this peculiar mentality concerning the spirit who is the avenger of injustices is to be noted the cult of the Sturlong spirit. This spirit is supposed to guard the wealth of the family with ruthless severity. It does not allow anything of value belonging to the family which honors it to be taken away. It is honored as a family deity, mostly among the Monguors of the